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Meditation in a New York Minute: Super Calm for the Super Busy

Mark Thornton
Sounds True (February 2006)
Unknown $19.95 (pp)
978-1-59179-428-8

The story of this author's discovery of "instant bliss that went way beyond happiness" is reminiscent of the biblical story of Saul's conversion on the road to Damascus. Like Saul, Thornton had not given much thought to whether or not he believed in God; yet "was profoundly changed by an instantaneous awakening" during a prayer with his father. At the age of thirteen, Thornton understood "bliss consciousness" and knew he wanted that feeling for the rest of his life. He also knew that he would have to have a job and liked the feeling of sleeping between clean sheets at night. Thus began his quest to be "super successful and super calm at the same time."

Trained as an investment banker, Thornton was interim Chief Operating Officer for JP Morgan in London. He's combined his quest for spirituality with his business acumen to teach busy people how to incorporate traditional meditation into lives filled with daily commutes, too many meetings, and constant cell phone calls. Realizing that time is the scarcest commodity, Thornton advises the listener to aim toward an hour of short meditations throughout the day rather than one hour of meditation at the beginning of the day. His goals are realistic, his methods are simple, and his directions are easily understood. Two of the easiest exercises involve taking the time to be silent for thirty seconds throughout the day or pressing one's index finger to the middle of one's forehead a chakra point) for a minute in order to achieve a sense of calm.

Understanding that the average human has approximately 60,000 thoughts per day every day and that many of those thoughts remain the same, Thornton has organized his work thematically "The Journey," "The Road Map," and "The Techniques") and numerically "Eight Laws of Meditation," "Five Secrets of the Super Calm," "The Eleven Thieves," and "The Seven Stages") as mnemonic devices. He encourages the seeker to be forgiving of the self and to learn to find the ways that these approaches best fit the individual's lifestyle and/or sense of the religious or spiritual.

The CDs open and conclude with New Age music by Mark McCoin. It's worth noting that the inside packaging of these CDs includes a quote and lovely illustrations. Thornton's years spent with enlightened teachers and teaching have served him well. His tone is soothing, his timing is excellent, and he stops to give the listener a chance to incorporate and absorb the practice before moving on to the next topic. Thornton, who has worked with more than thirty teachers in seven countries, has taken the best from each for this accessible selection of meditation techniques. (August 18, 2009)

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